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INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 4413
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 2225
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 2090
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 2661
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0910
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 2982
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
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SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN: UN PREVENTIVE DIPLOMACY CENTER
HOSTS CENTRAL ASIAN DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTERS

¶1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

¶2. (SBU) SUMMARY: The UN's Preventive Diplomacy Center in Ashgabat hosted the Central Asian deputy foreign ministers in a one-day forum to discuss regional challenges that include water, energy and Afghanistan, and to negotiate the elements of the Center's draft action plan that will guide its activities for the next three years. UN officials reported that while it had been productive to get all the Central Asians together to hash out some key regional challenges, reaching a consensus on the strategy was a prolonged process. Nevertheless, UN officials are nudging the Center's action plan forward, and are planning to have the deputy ministers meet again in the near future. The plan is fairly broad and ambitious, and if all parties approve the plan as it generally stands now, the Center will face challenges such as insufficient staffing as it seeks to fulfill expectations. END SUMMARY.

¶3. (SBU) Officials at the UN's Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy hosted a reception on October 16 to honor the five Central Asian deputy foreign ministers who met to discuss the Center's work plan for 2009-2011. The Center's draft work plan contains programs and activities designed to promote multilateral dialogue and develop a concrete strategy for addressing some of the region's most intransigent issues, including water and energy usage issues, cross-border trafficking and crime, terrorism and religious extremism. It also includes a strategy for promoting Afghanistan's regional integration and stability. According to Center director Miroslav Jenca, the deputy foreign ministers agreed that the priorities should be cross-border issues, water, and energy.

¶4. (SBU) The Center's political affairs officer, Armand Pupuls, said the draft work plan as it looks now is still very broad in its scope. If the scope does not become more narrow in terms of the projects and activities it encompasses, the Center's current staff will be insufficient to implement it. Another consideration, he said, is that as the Center undertakes specific projects, Center personnel will have to be very careful that their work does not focus overly much on any one Central Asian state. He also

suggested that the Turkmen were pressing for some activities to be focused more on Turkmenistan, which would also complicate the Center's host country relationship, and Center director Jenca was working hard to manage Turkmen government expectations in that regard.

¶5. (SBU) The UN Political Division's Deputy Director for Asia and Pacific Affairs, Jehangir Khan and a team of political officers also participated in the meeting. UN Political Affairs Officer Brian Vitunic said the discussions during the meeting had moved very slowly, as the five Central Asian representatives continued to quibble over their own bilateral problems and disagreed over the priorities of the work plan. Turkmen Deputy Minister Hajiyeu insisted that the group discuss the UN Pipeline Security Resolution that Turkmen representatives submitted during the recent UN General Assembly meeting in New York. Turkmen press reported that the group discussed the resolution, and expressed their support for it.

¶6. (SBU) Vitunic said that while the regional officials did not disagree on the regional political and economic issues or threats that challenge them, they had trouble agreeing on the initial steps of the Center's proposed strategies to deal with the issues. The deputy ministers have agreed to take the action plan back to their respective capitals and will meet again in the next month or two.

¶7. (SBU) COMMENT: The Center will face challenges in the future in implementing the action plan, due to its broad scope and the Center's limited staff. The larger challenge,

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however, will be to balance the Center's work and operate in a way that keeps its relations with the five states constructive and cooperative. END COMMENT.
CURRAN